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GREENKEEPER

HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE.



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JANUARY 1963

*An optimist is a fellow who
believes what's going to be will
be postponed.*

KIN HUBBARD.

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TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

THERE is fascination and speculation about that artificial line where country meets country—especially for those in these islands who even when they pass a sign welcoming them to Cymru meet no Jones the Customs to relieve them of contraband.

Last month we were walking round a site for a new course in France near Lille and at last found the perfect Out of Bounds. A hook off the 3rd tee will not only take the ball outside the course, but outside the country into Belgium; and if all goes well the 2nd tee should be in Belgium and the 2nd Green in France.

* * *

The Ormonde Fields Golf Club in Nottinghamshire is to get its course back following open-cast mining. The whole 9 holes were thrown out of action but the Committee remained intact and will soon have the first rewards of patience.

* * *

Fontainebleau Golf Club has taken in an extra piece of the forest and is considering whether to extend. This is one of the world's really attractive courses and with a little more length would surely have been more widely known. Pines, birch, oak, heather, and sandy soil characterise the setting. Fairways have mostly rolling contours and a new water system installed last year now maintains a good turf. Sprinklers are plugged into two rows of plastic capped points which run down each hole and there is no other above-ground equipment to set up or move around apart from green sprinklers.

* * *

Work on stream widening in Sutton Coldfield, part of which passes through Walmley Golf Course, is scheduled to start next May. An Act of Parliament was necessary so the preliminary stages have been longer than we hope the members will have to suffer.

* * *

King's College at Newcastle is planning a 9 hole golf course as part of its new sports centre at Heddon-on-the-Wall. As land is restricted, the course will be combined with a sports ground lay-out, but only cover the relatively little used winter pitches. A driving range will cater for golfers on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons in the winter terms. In summer cricket and golf can flourish side by side. This is a formula which more schools and local authorities could adopt to economise in use of land and in total cost.

The Golf Course Worker— His Relations With the Membership

by A. M. RADKO

Eastern Director, U.S.G.A. Green Section.

WHENEVER the situation exists that two persons on the same property are pursuing different objectives there is every chance for friction unless each employs a great deal of tact and judgment. In the member-worker relationship of the golf course set-up several touchy situations can arise because the member in one sense is the employer—the golf course worker the employee; the member is out for pleasure—the employee is there to work; the employee of necessity uses equipment that is noisy—the golfer wants quiet. These and numerous other matters, similarly extreme, could and do arise which make it imperative that there be some rules and regulations, defined or understood, as a basis for relations between the worker and the member. The worker receives his instruction from the Golf Course Superintendent; the member normally through various responsible committees. The golf course set-up is like most other organisations in that there are normal channels of authority that each should pursue in working toward any objective. The channels of authority are clearly defined and though they might vary slightly from club to club, they usually follow from the President to the Board of Governors to the Committees to the Chairmen, to the Superintendent to the employee. These channels of authority should be followed. Otherwise, embarrassing or serious consequences could result.

Glasshouse

The golf course employee works in a "house of windows," as large as all outdoors, in full view of the membership. From this it is easy for a member to gain a false impression of a worker's ability. It is natural but not altogether sound to draw firm conclusions from fleeting glances of an employee's habits. The point we wish to make here is that the member should not take it upon him-

self to judge an employee's performance. The Superintendent in charge knows what it takes to complete each and every assignment. If the employee is not producing, the Superintendent unquestionably will be the first to know it.

We take for granted that each, the member and the worker, will abide by the rules of common courtesies of our society—being polite and considerate in any request that is necessary to make of one another. Such is not always the case and this, we feel, is to some degree due to a lack of true knowledge of the other's objective. On the one hand the member should know a little about the amount of work that goes into the upkeep of the course. For example, putting greens are mowed 4 to 7 times weekly. Many a golfer assumes that greens are mowed only on the one day that he plays the course. The member often asks "Why must the greens be aerated at a time when greens are just about perfect for putting?" The average member is not really interested in the why. He usually asks the question without expecting an answer—it is often a way of showing his displeasure at the interference with his day's putting—his day of golf.

Well Trained Workers Smile

Another opportunity for friction arises when workmen are applying chemical treatment to a green while one foursome after another plays through. Many chemicals are dangerous or unpleasant to use because they blister or irritate skin and nasal passages. A worker with some of this chemical in his lungs, eyes, and on his skin because of strong shifting winds isn't exactly in a splendid frame of mind when asked to step aside for several foursomes. However, the well trained worker will manage a smile and accommodate the member because he, too, wishes to be co-operative and mannerly. Workmen take pride in the condition of the golf course, and their main concern always is to see the job through.



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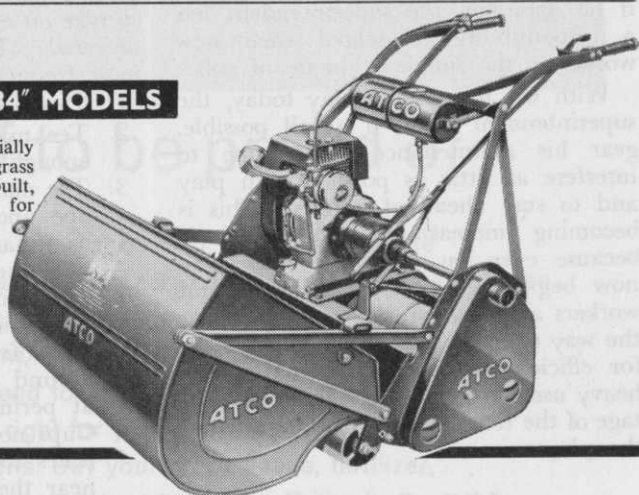
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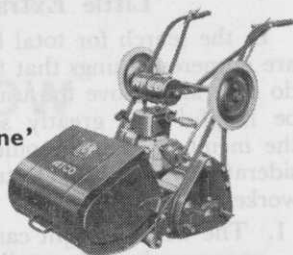
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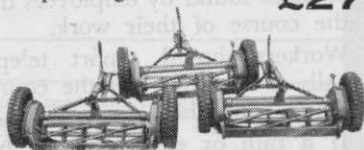
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THE GOLF COURSE WORKER—continued.

On the other hand, the golfer is out for a day's pleasure. He wants only to be able to concentrate on his game, and to score better this round than he did on his last. He wants no one around to interfere with his concentration, or to slow him up, or to in any way detract from the pleasure of his day at the course. If the worker doesn't know golf, he may not be aware that such things as walking or talking or motioning unnecessarily, or standing in the line of putt, could be disturbing to the golfer. The worker should know the game, but if he does not, the superintendent has a responsibility to school each new worker in the simple etiquette of golf.

With the increase in play today, the superintendent must, if at all possible, gear his maintenance programme to interfere as little as possible with play and to stay ahead of golfers. This is becoming increasingly more difficult because even on private courses play now begins very early each day, and workers are hard pressed to stay out of the way of golfers. It is difficult to plan for efficiency when golfers make such heavy use of the course; a great percentage of the time is lost in working around the players.

Little Extras

In the search for total harmony there are numerous things that the worker can do over and above the usual that would be helpful and greatly appreciated by the member. These would require consideration rather than extra time on the worker's part.

1. The worker might carry a few extra scorecards and pencils for forgetful members.
2. The worker might carry an extra golf ball or two to replace one inadvertently destroyed by equipment. The extra golf balls could be some of those found by employees during the course of their work.
3. Workers should report telephone calls to members on the course as soon as possible.
4. If a rain or electric storm breaks out, the worker could report the

players' locations so the superintendent can arrange to pick them up quickly.

5. If a worker finds a club, he should try to return it immediately or place it in a conspicuous place where the searching caddie could easily find it.

Common Complaints

From the playing point of view, in addition to good turf there are several things the members desire, most of them minor; however, the game of golf being greatly psychological, minor items tend to take on major proportions if endlessly deferred. Here are some items that most frequently cause complaint:

1. Tees are not level, not smooth.
2. Tee markers are not moved often enough—grass cover too sparse.
3. Tee markers are placed too close to one another.
4. Tee markers are not squared away with the correct line of flight.
5. Pin placements are unfair at times.
6. Pin placements (cups) are moved too infrequently. Grass is sparse around cups or long and scraggly at perimeter of cup.
7. Cups not replaced properly—sometimes too low, or too high, or too near the last cup placement.
8. Greens bumpy—not perfectly true.
9. Too much grain, mat, or thatch in greens.
10. Greens too soft or too hard—ball marks numerous and repaired badly.
11. Traps raked inadequately or not at all.
12. Traps edged improperly or unfairly—traps constructed so that they restrict backswing are most unfair.
13. Roughts too lush near edge of fairways.
14. Roads through course too numerous—made by constant traffic or course equipment.
15. Clean towel for ball washers not replaced often enough.

In return, the worker asks primarily for understanding and appreciation from the membership which frequently

(Continued on page 9)



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F. G. SMITH RETIRES

The S.T.R.I. starts a new era in 1963 without Frank Smith, Superintendent of Grounds for twenty-six years and a much loved figure in greenkeeping circles for longer than that. He will not be living far away but we shall miss him on the job.

His quiet, unruffled efficiency in routine or unusual tasks—the skill, confidence and enjoyment which characterise the way he approaches them—have been a model to the many who trained under him and have contributed something real and enduring to the greenkeeping tradition.

At a centre where new ideas and methods are constantly under review, his verdicts have been of infinite value in separating the practical from the pretentious and in helping manufacturers to improve prototype machines which he has tested. At the same time, he is reputed to be able to broadcast evenly by hand at $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. per square yard and would be more accurate at that rate than any machine one could mention.

His work for the Northern Section and for the Association, of which he was Chairman in 1956, need no repetition. It is typical that he should give of his time in the general interest. His lectures to the Sections have always been welcomed and we all hope that he will still find time to forget the bowler hat which he will now exchange for his brown trilby, and keep an eye on us for many years to come.

BIRMINGHAM BANQUET

Midland Section Dine Out

Just under ninety greenkeepers and their guests sat down to turkey and plum pudding with all the trimmings on 14th December. The President, Mr. Carl Bretherton, was in the Chair. The Association Chairman proposed the toast to the Association, which George Hart seconded, and Mr. T. R. Groom, a Vice-President, welcomed the guests, with special emphasis on the ladies.

The second part of the evening was enlivened by song, music, a lively auction and some talented amateur carol singers. Midnight came all too soon.

The only regret was Mrs. Bretherton's absence through ill health. We all hope she has now fully recovered.

CARTERS' BLUE BOOK

We have received Messrs. Carters' Blue Book of Gardening for 1963 which, with its improved colour sections, is still more attractive and a useful reference book as well as a catalogue. The Blue Book is well indexed and contains a wealth of information useful to the greenkeeper. Messrs. Carters will be pleased to send one to any of our readers on application to Raynes Park, London, S.W.20.

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A 1963 Atco 20-inch Special at Ladbroke Park Golf Club in front of the recently extended clubhouse. Colin Keegan from Atco Technical Sales Department is at the helm.

THE GOLF COURSE WORKER—continued.

is reflected in the way the member conducts himself on the course. If the member is careless in littering the course, in dragging his feet over greens, in burning greens with cigarettes, in taking divots unnecessarily, in failing to repair ball-marks, in recklessly walking through traps, in driving electric cars in restricted areas and numerous other minor but thoughtless acts, then the worker can only interpret these to mean his efforts are not appreciated.

The Small Extras

It's the small extras that make the big difference in this relationship. It's the co-operation on the part of every individual concerned that helps make the outstanding course. None of the items mentioned are severe matters in themselves, but in total they play an important part of the overall member-worker relationship.

(With grateful acknowledgments to the U.S.G.A. Journal.)

RULES QUERY

To the Editor.

Sir,

My opponent and I, playing in the Monthly Medal, had just holed out on the 2nd green when he said he had forgotten to telephone his office and must return to the Clubhouse. I pointed out that he would be disqualified for leaving the course, but he said that this could not be helped and he would rejoin me at the 4th tee.

A single player in front of us was still on the 3rd tee and drove off as I approached. Evidently his stance was unsound because he fell to the ground with a cry of pain and lay prostrate.

I hurried over to him and asked if he would mind if I played through because he was a single player and had no standing. I explained that I had myself started in a singles match and therefore had priority although my partner was temporarily absent. I also asked him to observe my play for the hole so that he could confirm my score while my partner was away.

He explained that as he had apparently broken his leg he would not be continuing this particular round nor indeed, any other for some time to come and consequently the question of standing need not arise. He added that he would sign any card I cared to produce if this seemed likely to hasten the completion of my round when perhaps I would be good enough to notify the Secretary that there was an injured man on the 3rd tee.

I then asked him to move over since he was occupying that part of the tee two clubs' lengths behind the markers which was the only area within which I was permitted to tee up, and drew his attention to Definition 32.

He said that he could neither refer to the Rules nor accede to my request because the aforementioned broken leg tended to restrict his movements. Nevertheless, if he had been more mobile he would immediately have responded and would moreover have taken some

pleasure in doing me physical injury. Preferring to seek a civilised answer to his unco-operative attitude, I suggested that he allow me to tee the ball on his forehead since I should still be able to drive off with the ball within the prescribed area, although I should be standing outside it (vide: Note to Rule 13). To reassure him, I explained that I had frequently seen this done by professionals of only local repute and it seemed to cause nobody any alarm except the spectators.

I suspect that he was about to reject even this simple remedy when a spasm of pain rather sharper than those which he had been enduring up to this point rendered him unconscious.

I therefore placed the ball on his brow on a rubber tee but the double irritation of argument and delay caused me to swing too quickly and I dealt him a blow on the temple which proved to be fatal. Even so, the ball was dislodged and I was able to hole out in one more than bogey.

I am writing this letter from prison and my future may depend on whether under Rule 31 (2) I should have treated him as an immovable obstruction and dropped within two clubs' length of that part of the outside of him nearest which I should otherwise have been able to tee up, or whether I was obliged to tee the ball within the area stipulated in Definition 32. The Club Committee has ruled that he was a loose impediment and that in any case I should have played a second provisional ball and holed out with both pending their decision. They have therefore disqualified me, but I should like to have your ruling and also the name and address of the Hon. Secretary of any barristers' golfing society of which you happen to know.

Yours faithfully,

STICKLER,

(Name and address supplied).